dominated by chestnut oak (*Quercus montana*), sourwood (*Oxydendron arboreum*), shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*) and beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). The understory is dominated by mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). Pinxter flower (*Rhododendron nudiflorum*) occurs at the bottom of the slope at the edge of the floodplain.

Little River Uplands (L-1), is possibly the largest tract of relatively undisturbed upland hardwood forest remaining in the county. Some sections have a medium-aged dry-mesic oak-hickory forest community (Schafale and Weakley 1985) with a canopy of red oak (*Quercus rubra*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), mockernut hickory (*Carya tomentosa*), pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). The understory consists of red maple, white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) and sourwood (*Oxydendron arboreum*). Patches of younger forest dominated by shorleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) occur in parts. The forest grades into a drier phase with white oak, mockernut hickory and shortleaf pine along ridges and a mesic mixed hardwood community (Schafale and Weakley 1985) with beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), red maple and red oak becoming dominant on the lower slopes along the Little River. Some of the steeper slopes have extensive patches of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*).

Quail Roost Oak Uplands (U-3), is a tract of mature dry-mesic oak-hickory forest over Davidson soils, which has not been recognized as a distinct community. The canopy of red oak (*Quercus rubra*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) is an unusual mix of species. The understory is thick in redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), dogwood (*Cornus florida*), holly (*Ilex opaca*) and red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). A gentian (*Gentiana villosa*) was among the few herbaceous species found at the site.

PROTECTION STATUS AND THREATS:

The slopes above the Little River Reservoir are protected from development through ownership by the City of Durham, but only to the top of the steep bluffs (a house is located immediately adjacent to the city property line on top of the south slope above the lake). The rest of this area, including the entire gorge upstream from the lake, is privately owned and subject either to development or timbering. New homes are, in fact, being constructed throughout this region, including the area identified as the Little River Uplands by Rob Sutter (1987).

The corridor function of the Little River is also being affected by downstream developments. US 501 and adjoining developed areas around Orange Factory already present a significant obstacle separating the upland areas above the Little River Reservoir from the extensive gamelands located along the confluence of the Little and Eno Rivers. The two reservoirs themselves restrict overland movements along this section and are a virtually absolute barrier to fish and many other aquatic species.

Even more important, at least potentially, the Treyburn development embraces the Little River between Orange Factory and the gamelands. The intensive development planned for this tract may virtually sever any linkage between the upper and lower wildlife habitats along the Little River.